DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 143 324 IR 004 894

AUTHOR Hambelton, Ben
TITLE A Conceptual Framework for Instructional Improvement; K through University.
PUB DATE 75
NOTE 7p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS College Faculty; College Instruction; *Communication (Thought Transfer); Higher Education; *Instructional Design; *Instructional Improvement; *Models; *Program Development

ABSTRACT

This paper presents a model for integrating the various approaches to instructional improvement that may prove useful in organizing new programs. The model is based upon the notion that instruction is essentially a communication process that can be analyzed in terms of the four components of a teaching communication model. These components are discussed in relation to conceptual approaches. Figures are used to present the teaching communication model and the appropriate approach to instructional improvement for each component. Appropriate activities in each component of the model could be structured to benefit instruction at the primary and secondary as well as the college or university level. Conceptualizing in terms of a teaching communication model may also help in organizing activities for the goal of providing faculty renewal and instructional improvement. (JPF)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED143324

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

IR 004894

A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT K THROUGH UNIVERSITY

Ben Hambelton

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Benjamin E. Hambelton

TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER.

IR004894

E/I

A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT K THROUGH UNIVERSITY

Ben Hambelton
Director Educational Media Services
Boise State University

In recent years, many programs and agencies have been established on college and university campuses, and educational institutions at all levels, in response to the growing perception for the need of improvement of instruction.

The need for programs to improve instruction has been widely discussed in professional literature. One of the most significant publications in sensitizing the field of education to the need for faculty renewal and instructional improvement has been, Faculty Development in a Time of Re-entrenchment, by the Group for Human Development in Higher Education.

This publication, along with many similar books and journal articles, has resulted in an increased interest in the establishment of programs to guide the improvement of instruction. Literally hundreds of such programs have been established at colleges and universities across the nation. The influence of these programs is being felt at the public school level, as many state and local educational agencies are beginning to establish programs of a similar nature, whose goals embrace the improvement of instruction. Those struggling with the establishment of an instructional improvement program must answer questions of how best to organize the program, what goals to establish, how to finance and manage the program, and what activities it ought to be engaged in.

Dr. Jerry Gaff, in his book, Toward Faculty Renewal, has helped provide the answers to many of these questions through an analysis of the present state of the art. Dr. Gaff identifies three prevailing conceptions of approaches to instructional improvement. He suggests that three different approaches can be distinguished among the many programs that have been established. Each identified approach tends to focus attention on different areas, to strive after different goals, to draw from different intellectual traditions and to involve different kinds of activities. These different approaches he terms faculty development, instructional development and organizational development.

Dr. Gaff then gives an extended treatment of each of the three approaches to instructional improvement, along with examples from established programs. He notes, however, that the reader should not over-estimate the extent of conceptual purity found in the operational programs. He suggests that most programs are a blurring, or combination, of the three conceptual approaches to instructional improvement. He further notes that some of the most exciting programs are those which combine elements of each in a comprehensive design. Implied in his book is the suggestion that those establishing new programs would do well to consider activities and goals appropriate to each of the three conceptions for instructional improvement.

Many significant and useful heuristics, or guides, for the implementation of programs for the improvement of instruction are presented in Dr. Gaff's book. Lacking, however, because of the nature of the book, is a model, or conceptual framework for engaging all three approaches to instructional improvement in a single, comprehensive program. Such a model, or conceptual framework, would allow the organizers of an improvement program to synthesize the various approaches to instructual improvement, in such a way as to capitalize upon the strengths and goals of each, while at the same time, maintaining some direction and coherence for the program as a whole.

This paper presents a model for integrating the various approaches to instructional improvement that may prove useful in organizing a new program. It also appears useful in application at a variety of levels.

The model is based upon the notion that instruction is essentially a process of communication. It suggests that instruction can be analyzed in terms of the components of a communication model. Viewing instruction as communication, one can distinguish four components and their environment. The first component may be identified as a source, or initiator, of the communication, in this context, generally a faculty member. The second component is the message or materials carrying the message. The third component would be the channel in which the message is sent to the fourth component, the receiver, a student or learner. Every communication act is set within a context, or environment, that conditions the effectiveness of the communication.

Using this conception, instruction can be viewed as a system of components that are inter-related in such a way that manipulation of one component will affect all the other components in the system. Thus, if an effort is made to provide the source of the model (instructor) with more effective channels or mediums of communication (example, computer-assisted instruction), the receiver (student) should also be prepared with the appropriate skills to deal with the new channel. A comprehensive program of instructional improvement based upon this model would have to provide a means of improving each component of the communication model, as well as the environment, or context, in which it is set. Applying the conceptual approaches identified by Dr. Gaff to the model, it would be possible to match faculty development to the source of the model, instructional development to the message component, and organizational development to the environment or the context in which the communication takes place.

In a recent issue of the "Occasional Paper Series" from the Division of Instructional Development, Dr. Paa-Bekoe Welbeck introduced the notion of a student development to the concept of instructional improvement. This idea suggests that students need to be provided with the appropriate skills for learning if instructional improvement is to take place. This idea could be applied to the receiver component of the teaching communication model. The channel component of the model may be represented by the Library-Media Resource Services of an institution. These

resources often provide the means, or vehicles, for transferring the selected messages from faculty to learners. A program concentrating on the development of materials (instructional development) and the development of presentation skills (faculty development) may still be ineffective if appropriate textual and audio-visual materials and equipment are not available for utilization by the faculty member. This conception clearly subordinates the channel component to other components in the model, while still underscoring its importance to the effectiveness of instructional improvement.

Figure 1 presents the teaching communication model and the appropriate approach to instructional improvement for each component.

TEACHING / COMMUNICATION MODEL

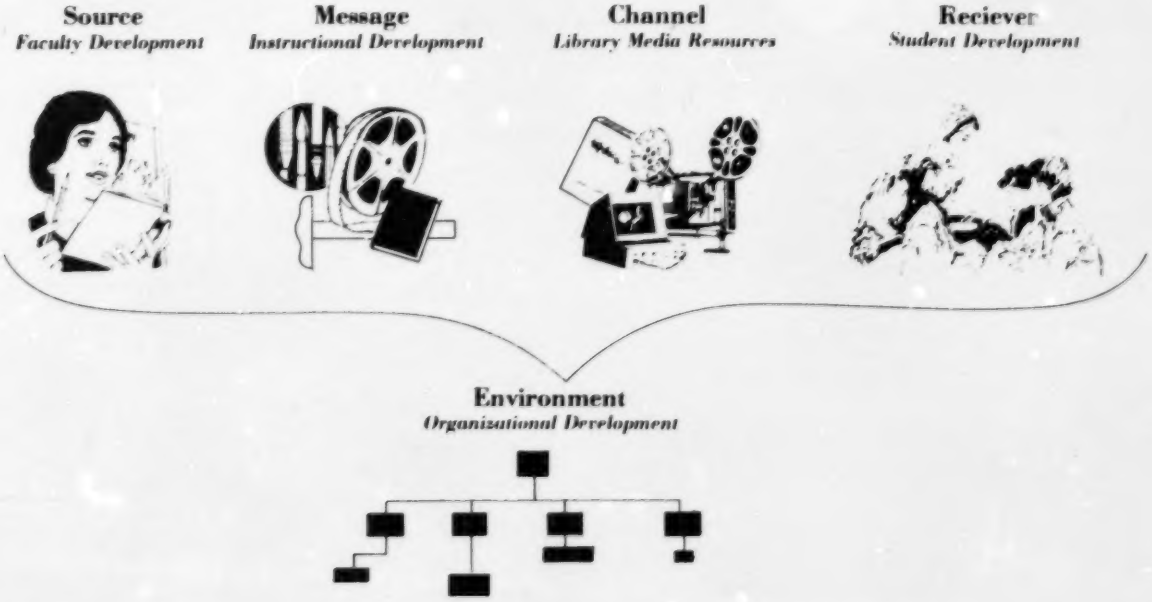

Figure 1

An instructional improvement program structured on the basis of this teaching communication model could be involved in the type of activities as represented in Figure 2.

TYPICAL ACTIVITIES IN A COMPREHENSIVE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

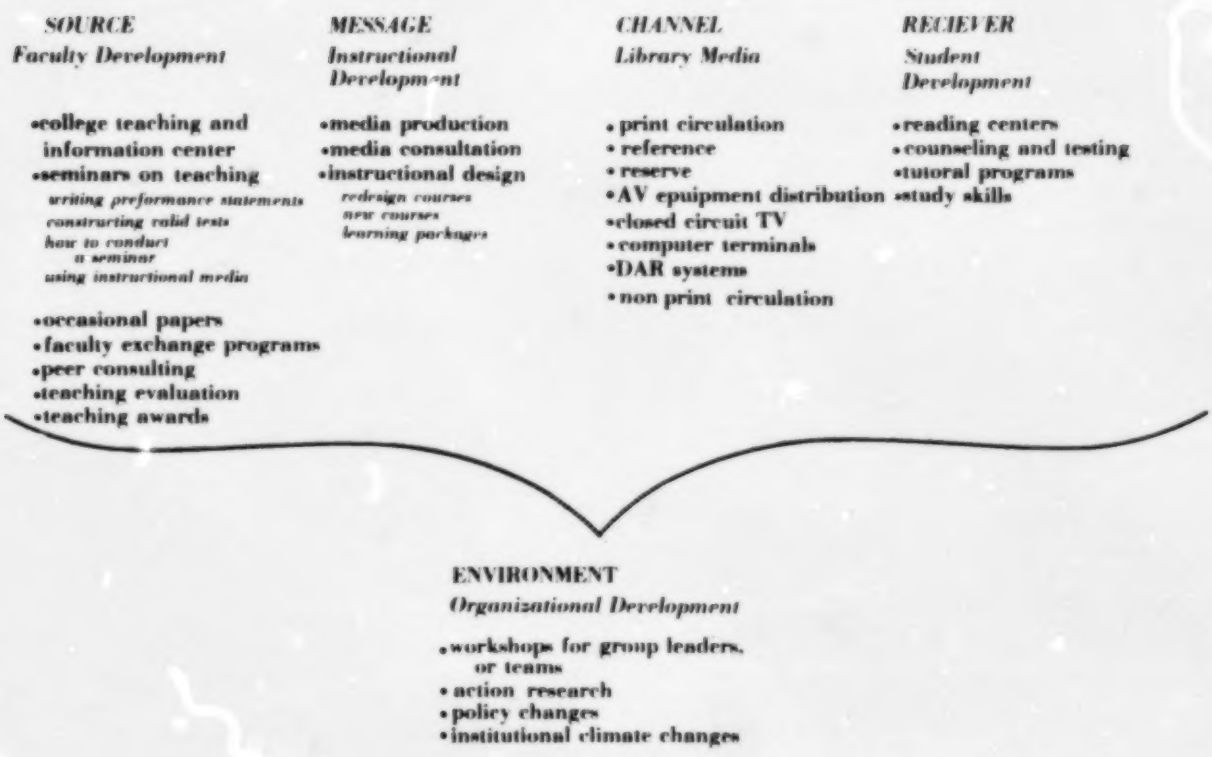

Figure 2

This kind of conceptual framework for instructional improvement would allow organizers of such a program to incorporate the strengths and goals of each conceptual approach into a comprehensive program. Such a program would include activities to strengthen and improve the teaching skills of faculty members as selectors, organizers and presenters of information and learning experiences. It would provide activities for the development of materials to be used in teaching. It would establish the importance of properly managed learning media support services, and it would provide for the development of skills by students to assist them in their learning efforts. It would also include activities to strengthen and improve the organizational support for innovation, experimentation and improvement within the university itself through the development of skills and abilities of administrators and changes in administrative policies and procedures.

Such a comprehensive program could be applied at almost any educational level. Appropriate activities in each component of the model could be structured to the benefit of instructors at the primary, secondary level, as well as the community college or the university level. In the same manner, the emphasis on supplying

students with the skills to learn would be appropriate in any educational setting and on any level.

This model could be useful not only in establishing and organizing new programs, but in evaluating the completeness of programs already in existence. The model could be used as a guide in the planning of additional activities and program components to complete and broaden existing programs. Whatever the stage of development of an instructional improvement program, conceptualizing it in terms of a teaching communication model may help in organizing activities to the goal of providing faculty renewal and instructional improvement.